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CHINA'S APPROACH TO AFRICA: REVOLUTIONARY MODEL AND INSTITUTION--ETC(U)  
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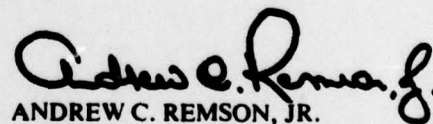
SUBJECT: Special Report: *China's Approach to Africa: Revolutionary Model and Institutional Framework.*


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## SUMMARY

For decades the United States lacked a cohesive foreign policy for Africa. Certainly the African continent did not receive high priority attention. The rapidity and extent of the success that the Soviet-China axis has achieved in Africa juxtaposed to the perceived inability of the United States to react decisively to such an offensive has stimulated study of alternative models of approach to bilateral and multilateral relationships with African states.

One such alternative is the Chinese model, one not without its own vulnerabilities but one which has met with limited success in some sub-Saharan countries.

A fleeting comment on the military aspects of the Chinese model is followed by a more extensive analysis of the model's nonmartial revolutionary and developmental features. The Chinese model's emphasis on economic independence achieved through internalization and social revolution via human engineering is examined in its potential for selective adoption by various sub-Saharan societies. The ingredients of the Chinese model that have proven to be attractive to some African states are examined in the light of a bipolar world of developed and underdeveloped nations.

A judgement is offered as to the extent with which ideology affects the overall success or failure of China's approach to African nations. Ideology is a particularly operative force in the structuring of the Chinese foreign policy apparatus, as it is a significant factor in the selection of personnel and the type of training they receive. An historical sketch of this ever-changing apparatus follows next with catalogues of the enrollment and promotion criteria employed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A few key Chinese Africanists are profiled in an attempt to assess the overall quality of Peking's effort in Africa.

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## CHINA'S APPROACH TO AFRICA: REVOLUTIONARY MODEL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

This report will examine the Chinese revolutionary and development model in the context of its applicability to African states. The paper will include a sketch of China's governmental apparatus that bears responsibility for Peking's African policy. A judgment will also be rendered as to the overall effectiveness of China's African policy, as a result of the interaction of model and bureaucracy. Lastly, a statement will be added as to the relationship, if any, that Chinese success or failure has to American interests.

The model that Peking has offered to newly politically independent African states is an ambitious one indeed. While the Chinese admit to the impracticality of carbon-copy application, they do insist that if selectively adopted by underdeveloped nations, such a course will lead to economic independence. Although the Chinese model requires social revolution, it is essentially an experiment in human engineering—a sinicized "New Soviet Man." Maoist ideology accentuates the effectiveness of the revolutionary frame of mind. The whole thrust of the concept of permanent revolution graphically illustrated by the Cultural Revolution is to avoid the revolution's eventual proclivity toward Marxist institutionalism epitomized by the system of democratic centralism extant in the Soviet Union. The Chinese caution African indigenous leadership groups to avoid being satisfied with the mirage of modernization, projects that only the superpowers or their industrialized clients can provide. The Maoist blueprint urges African regimes to choose man over the prestige factor, e.g. a new weapon's system or a sophisticated technical program that can only be effectively administered by foreign personnel.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese have preached the gospel of self-sufficiency to the nonindustrialized societies of Africa, an arduous path for sure but one that will avoid neocolonialist schemes that are nourished by the inordinate desire of nativist leadership to close the gap with industrialized societies.<sup>2</sup> The avoidance of "get rich quick scenarios" and the acceptance of the harsh reality of staged development is encouraged, with the initial phase solidly based in agriculture followed by light and then heavy industry. In an attempt to sober the vaunted oratory of the leadership of some underdeveloped states, encouraged by the success of the OPEC cartel, Wang Yua-yi, the Chinese delegate to the 1973 Vienna session of UNIDA, i.e. the United Nations Industrial Development Association, advised the representatives from the underdeveloped states:

The struggles which the developing countries experience show that trust in one's own strength is the most important thing and that international help based on equal rights and mutual profit must be secondary, if the path to the development of national industry and to industrialization is to be reliable and trustworthy.<sup>3</sup>

The Chinese insist that every institution in former European colonies must experience revolution: political independence whether won by people's war or demonstration is not enough to assure the endurance of that national independence much less guarantee successful economic development. European-educated African elites in all sectors of the society must be reeducated into a nativist and revolutionary consciousness or be banished from positions of influence altogether. The military role in a revolutionary society is instructive in explaining the Chinese position. Although the People's Liberation Army proved to be a most effective fighting force in its application of Maoist guerrilla war doctrine in the acquisition of national power in China, it served an equally significant role in the modernization of China. The Chinese model rejects the proclivity of many African states toward Bonapartism and regressive military juntas as being the natural product of maintaining professional armies, as a remnant of imperialist rule. The PLA has always been thoroughly involved in China's development process—agricultural as well as industrial programs. The units also boast of self-sufficiency, some growing their own food and producing their own clothes. In short, the PLA is not a ward of the state. This dynamic is not a unique solution in servicing an army's logistical needs. Tso Tsung-t'ang's army, which achieved the reconquest of Sinkiang from the Muslim forces of Yakub Beg during the seventh decade of the nineteenth century, was successful in its mission due in part to the self-sufficient nature of the troop contingents, a profile that was necessary as a consequence of terrain and climatical extremities that made conventional means of resupply impractical. Certainly the disciplined, well-motivated work force that a revolutionary-conscious army can provide in the accomplishment of labor-intensive modernization projects is an attractive example for civilian sectors of the economy and a most formidable catalyst in the transformation of the entire society itself.<sup>4</sup> China is not unfamiliar with the successful utilization of mass to achieve herculean undertakings, although the ideological commitment of the PLA obviates the need for "slave labor" that executed the construction of such monumental features of the Chinese landscape as the canal system and the Great Wall (but not eliminated its existence or utility in the reeducation process of purged party bureaucrats.) The Chinese construction of the Tan-Zam railroad seemingly defies nature itself. It is ironic that at a moment when



environmentalist lobby pressures in Europe and America have succeeded to some degree in retarding the emphatically western historical dynamic of subduing the forces of nature to service man's desire to improve the quality of life, the formerly Taoist Chinese are propagating to African nations the conquest of adverse natural conditions as being the solution in part to the casting off of their underdeveloped status. The Chinese have in addition cautioned the newly independent African states against rapid and unnatural urbanization, especially if the societies are primarily of an agricultural profile. Nyerere's *ujamaa* model is in congruence with this admonition.<sup>7</sup> The *ujamaa* style is an attempt to make the Tanzanian countryside self-sufficient on a village level, thus avoiding the mass exodus from rural to urban areas and thus avoiding also the potential for instability that an unskilled, unemployable urban-underclass can provide. The lack of a substantial factory-based working class in many of the African states has encouraged the Chinese to reproduce their own historical revolutionary experience, particularly in the sub-Saharan regions. Maoist doctrine defied Marxist theory and historical assumptions as to the character of the peasant class by building the revolutionary base in the countryside. The Chinese model does not accentuate internationalist attempts at wealth redistribution or even efforts at achieving equity in future economic dealings between the industrialized and underdeveloped countries. The Chinese political leadership views these schemes as servicing the industrialized societies, in short a blueprint particularly orchestrated by the United States in order to buy time and ultimately world stability. Peking's African specialists have urged states such as Zambia, Tanzania, Ghana, Congo (Brazzaville) and Cameroon to internalize their economies, not to concern themselves with the balance of payments syndrome. These two characteristics of the Chinese model, i.e. deurbanization and internalization of the economy, have recently been perversely applied in Cambodia with less than appealing results. Nevertheless, the Chinese advice to African societies not to attempt to compete with the West in the import-export trade seems to be wise counsel. Rather, Chinese Africanists assert that pains should be taken to develop indigenous light industry that would service the agricultural economic base, such as chemical fertilizer and farm machinery plants.

The more violent side of the Chinese model, the Maoist doctrine of people's war, will most likely meet with less facile application as most of Africa's societies now possess indigenous leadership. The effort by Britain and America to establish an acceptable non-Marxist nativist government in Rhodesia is an attempt to frustrate the application of the military dimension of the Chinese model. The effort has met with limited success insofar as the establishment of a transitional government has prevented the crystallization of a nativist united front, a cardinal feature of the people's war strategy. Ironically, survival of the transitional government of Muzorewa, Sithole, Chirau, and Smith may be determined by the effectiveness of Soviet support for a people's war strategy executed by the Patriotic Front of Mugabe and Nkomo. The success of the Viet Min was the recalcitrant French position which enabled the former to become acceptable to non-Communist nationalist groups in Indochina. The Maoists insist that their military success during the Chinese Civil War was in no small part due to the "Eight Points of Attention of the People's Liberation Army." The code of ethical comportment is as follows:

- (1) Speak politely
- (2) Pay fairly for what you buy
- (3) Return everything you borrow
- (4) Pay for anything you damage
- (5) Do not hit or swear at people
- (6) Do not damage crops
- (7) Do not take liberties with women
- (8) Do not ill-treat captives.<sup>8</sup>

This is truly a code for an army of saints; one would expect to hear from their collective voices the strains of the Chinese equivalent of "Onward Christian Soldiers." There is at this time little evidence that African liberation armies have adopted this code as a rule for the conduct of their affairs. However, there is far more to the Chinese model of revolutionary development that attracts African elites other than the staged progression of guerrilla liberation warfare, particularly since most of Africa's present leadership consider national liberation an accomplished reality.

Professor George T. Yu of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign catalogues other aspects of the Chinese model that motivate some African societies initially, at least, to emulate the Chinese example. Yu cites "the rapidity of development, the bold and successful experiments in mass education and health programs, organizational expertise, and the establishment of a modernized society without destruction of the mass agricultural base."<sup>9</sup>

Chinese foreign policy is formulated and administered through a myriad of agencies, ministries and bureaus that essentially exist on three levels of the same political reality. Firstly, there are the party offices, secondly, the government organs and thirdly, the "semi-official" people's solidarity organizations. It is only with the second level of bureaucratic apparatus that we find a resemblance to the conventional foreign

The Structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the People's Republic of China

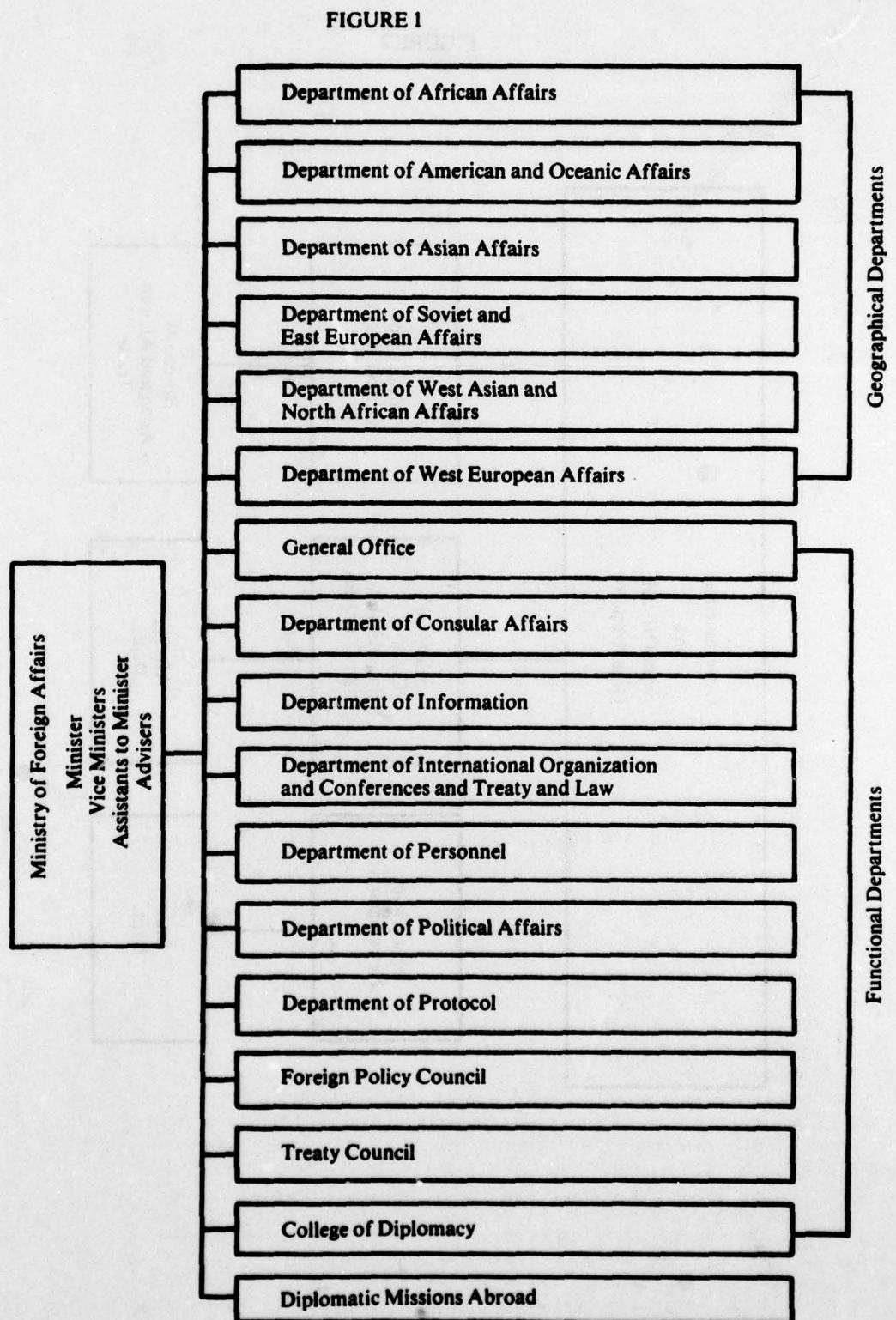




FIGURE 2

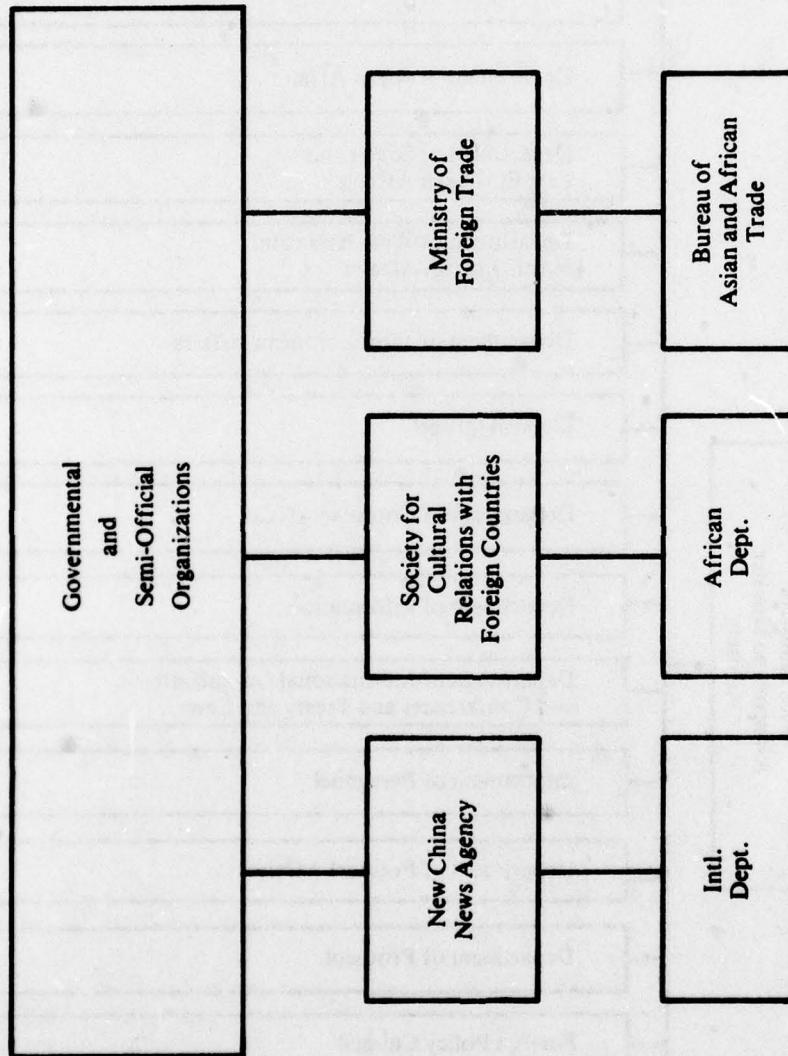
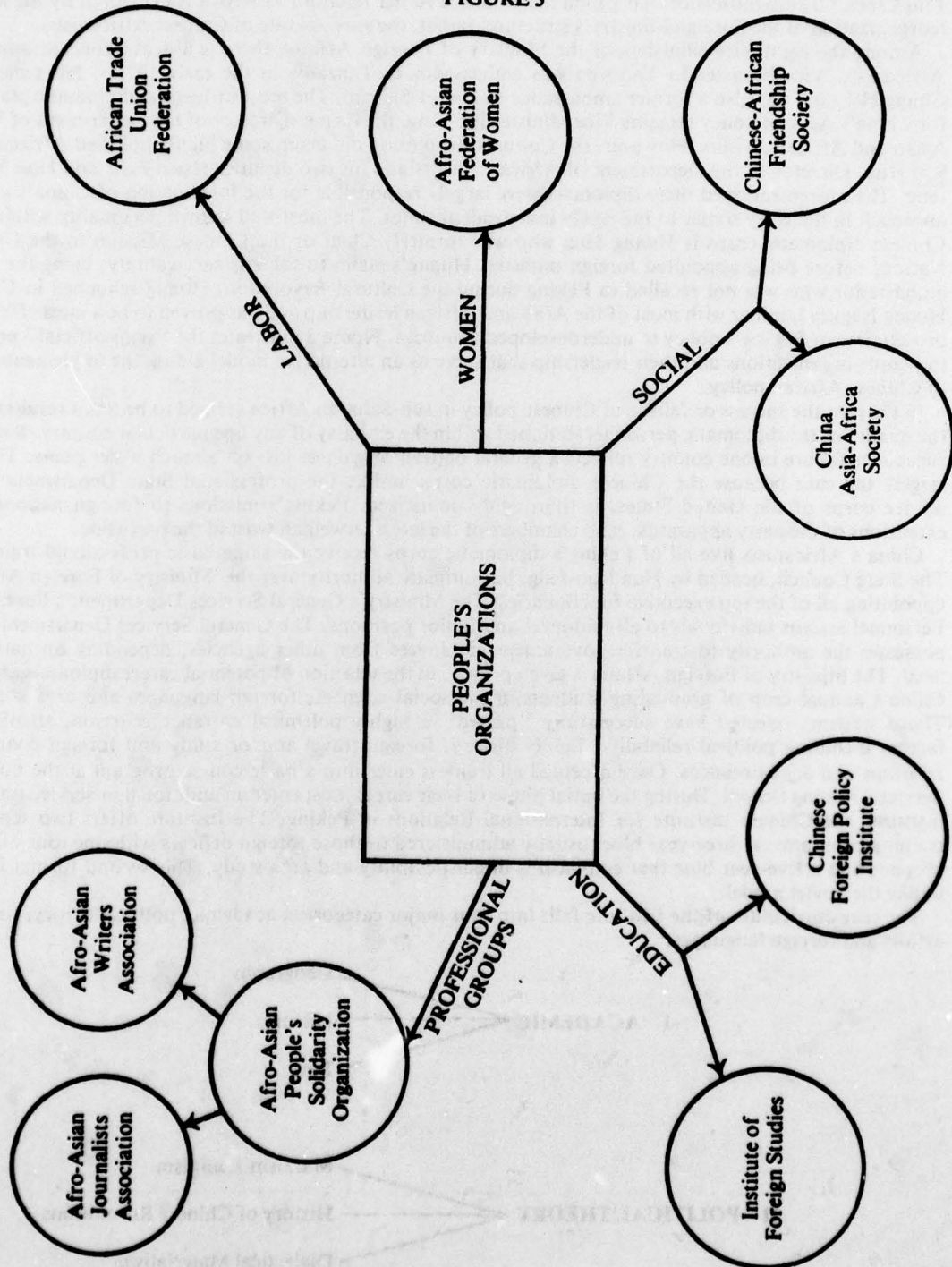


FIGURE 3



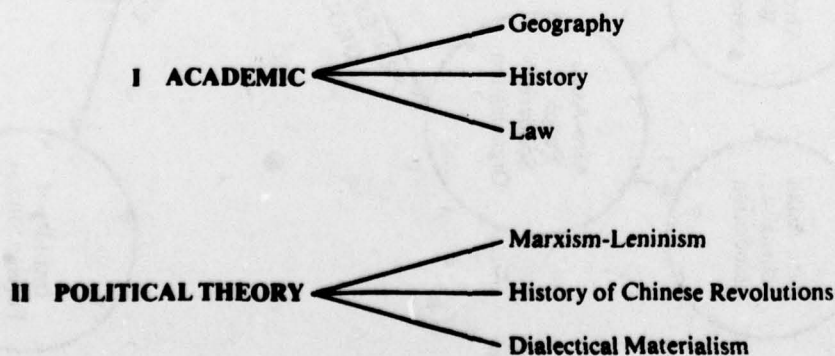
policy decision-making model. Since 1949, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has undergone continuous reorganization. State relations with Africa however are now divided into Arab and sub-Saharan divisions. Within the ministry, there exists the Department of West Asian and North African Affairs and the Department of African Affairs. It is the latter with which we will be mostly concerned. The present directorate of the Department of African Affairs includes Chang Shu, Chou Chueh, Ho Kung-k'ai and Tsui Chien.<sup>8</sup> The significance that China has attached to her relations in Africa is evidenced by the latest reorganization of the Foreign Ministry's structure; rather, the survival rate of Chinese Africanists.

Among the eight Vice Ministers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is a heavy concentration of Africanists. Vice Minister Li Yao-wen was ambassador to Tanzania in the early 1970's. His colleague Chung Hsi-tung was also a former ambassador to Dar-es-Salaam. The most influential diplomatic planner for China's African policy remains Vice Minister Ho Ying, the former Director of the Department of West Asian and African Affairs. However, the Cultural Revolution did claim some highly polished Africanists: K'o Hua, Director of the Department of African Affairs and his two deputies Hsieh Feng and Hou Yieh-feng. The aforementioned three diplomats were largely responsible for the formulation of China's initial approach in the early sixties to the newly independent states. The most well known personality within the Chinese diplomatic corps is Huang Hua who was formerly Chief of the Chinese Mission to the United Nations before being appointed foreign minister. Huang's claim to fame is survivability, being the only ambassador who was not recalled to Peking during the Cultural Revolution; Huang remained in Cairo. Huang is quite familiar with most of the Arab and African leadership and has proven to be a most effective proselytizer of Peking's policy to underdeveloped countries. Figure 3 illustrates the "semi-official" people to people organizations and their leadership that serve as an alternative model aiding the implementation of Chinese African policy.

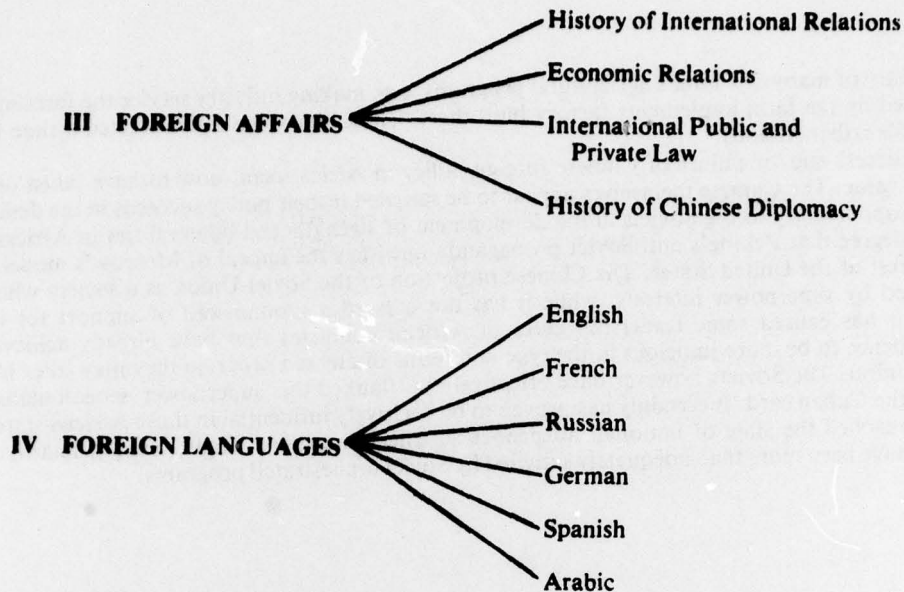
In the past the success or failure of Chinese policy in sub-Saharan Africa seemed to be less a resultant of the quality of the diplomatic personnel stationed within the embassy of any one particular country. Rather, success or failure in one country reflects a general pattern of gain or loss on a much wider plane. This is largely the case because the Chinese diplomatic corps, unlike the professional State Department civil service corps of the United States, is thoroughly politicized. Peking's missions to foreign nations are extensions of the party apparatus, echo chambers of the latest Orwellian twist in the party line.

China's Africanists like all of Peking's diplomatic corps receive the same basic professional training. The State Council, headed by Hua Kuo-feng, has ultimate authority over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointing all of the top executive functionaries. The Ministry's General Services Department's Bureau of Personnel assigns individuals to all mid-level and junior positions. The General Services Department also possesses the authority to transfer government employees from other agencies, depending on national need. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is given priority in the selection of potential career diplomats among China's annual crop of graduating students in the social sciences, foreign languages and area studies. Those students selected have successfully "passed" a highly polemical entrance criterion, significant factors including political reliability, family history, foreign travel and/or study and foreign contacts, relations and acquaintances. Once accepted all trainees enter into a basic course program at the Foreign Service Training School. During the initial phase of their career most enter an additional in-service training institute, the Chinese Institute for International Relations in Peking. The Institute offers two separate training programs: a three-year bloc, usually administered to those foreign officers with one tour of duty abroad; and a five-year bloc that emphasizes linguistic ability and area study. This second format is not unlike the Soviet model.

The core curriculum of the Institute falls into four major categories: academic, political theory, foreign affairs and foreign languages.







Despite what appears to be a comprehensive and in-depth course offering, the entire thrust of the training period is preponderantly ideological.

Certainly in the last decade, promotions, recognition and appointments were awarded to those who were deemed politically loyal if not professionally able. Those who possessed polemical agility, with a strong indifference to fact, advanced or at least survived the ideological purge of the Cultural Revolution. Ezra Vogel asks the rhetorical question, "Who should have power the 'red' or the 'expert'?" He incisively poses a primary dilemma that has plagued the decision-making process of the Chinese civil service bureaucracy: "... which criterion was more important, virtue (te) or ability (sai)." The conduct of Chinese foreign policy has of course suffered to the degree that merit took a back seat to ideological correctness—a kind of Maoist spoils system. Professionals were judged more on their occupational loyalty, combatting corruption, personal discipline and safeguarding of government property than they were for superior duty performance and contributions to the national well-being. This criterion of judgment of one's professional performance led to lack of initiative, an unwillingness to challenge existing policy and pervasively low morale among the ranks of the civil bureaucracy. However, for those not so agile, there remains the possibility of rehabilitation through ideological reeducation programs.

The Chinese profile in Africa has not yet rebounded from when the entire fabric of the Chinese diplomatic corps was rent asunder by the Cultural Revolution. However, the policy reverses in Africa of the early 1960's predated the Cultural Revolution. In June and July 1965 respectively China lost to coup d'etats her two staunchest "protoges" on the African continent, Ben Bella of Algeria and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. As a consequence of amateurish heavy-handed exploitation of existing internal tensions within Africa's non-Marxist states, Burundi (1965), the Central African Republic now Empire (1966), and Dahomey now Benin (1966) suspended diplomatic relations with Peking. However, it was not until the latter months of 1966 and early 1967 that diplomatic reversals abroad were compounded with folly at home. Most of China's 665 institutions of higher learning remained closed for months on end.<sup>9</sup> Enrollment procedures, entrance tests and academic retention standards all became casualties of the educational dimension of the Cultural Revolution. Maoist equivalents of the Bolshevik Soviets were established to oversee educational administration. These "3 in 1" committees comprised representatives of the People's Liberation Army, revolutionary teachers, students and workers and members of the local revolutionary committee.<sup>10</sup>

In those African countries where the imitation of the Chinese model for development has succeeded to some degree, despite the unprofessional nature of the diplomatic corps and the seemingly endless domestic turmoil, the latter's aid programs usually are long-term capital improvement projects or agriculturally oriented programs. The Chinese seem to excel at least in these two forms of "influence buying schemes." Construction projects have included the financing and logistical support given to the deep water port for Nouakchott, Mauritania, to the laying of a 1,045 kilometer road from Beledwein to Burao, Somalia and, the most memorable of all, the Tan-Zam Railway. Tanzania and its *ujamaa* system has indeed been a

beneficiary of many of China's agricultural programs, e.g. making industry service the farming sector as is evidenced by the farm implements factory built there. The Chinese have also erected a shoe factory near Mtoni, Zanzibar (Island).

The success and/or failure of Chinese foreign policy in Africa seems now to have taken on a negative scale of value. The Chinese themselves appear to be satisfied if their policy succeeds in the denial of a clear field of opportunity to the Soviets in the development of strengthened bilateral ties in African countries. To the degree that Peking's anti-Soviet propaganda tarnishes the appeal of Moscow's model, this serves the interest of the United States. The Chinese projection of the Soviet Union as a society whose policy is motivated by superpower interests, while it has not created a groundswell of support for the Chinese model, it has caused some leadership elites in African countries that have already achieved political independence to be more judicious in the type and terms of any aid program they may enter into with the Soviet Union. The Soviets however have effectively outflanked this superpower neocolonialist image by playing the Cuban card. It certainly has proven to be decisively influential in those African states that have not yet reached the state of national independence. Their immediate needs, being primarily military in nature, have been more than adequately satisfied by Soviet orchestrated programs.

#### ENDNOTES

1. It appears that since the death of Mao and the assignment to political oblivion of the "Gang of Four," China has reevaluated this article of faith with regard to its own internal development in the acceptance of Teng Hsiao-ping's application of Chou-en-lai's modernization program evidenced by the Chinese solicitation of modern industrial and military technology from the metropolitan West. The decision to import foreign aid is most likely motivated by the apparent mismatch of the confronting armies on the Sino-Soviet frontier.
2. A gospel that is now under extensive attack within China itself. The realities of the mismatch on the Sino-Soviet border and the continuing process of political elimination of the "Gang of Four" loyalists have caused the Chinese leadership to permit an alloyment of the ideological purist goal of self-sufficiency.
3. *Proceedings of the UNIDA Conference*. Vienna Session (United Nations Press, 1973).
4. Those within the Chinese leadership that place modernization before ideology have criticized the extensive use of military units in non-military ventures while neglecting their primary responsibility.
5. *Ujamaa* -(Swahili for familyhood) while a thoroughly organic Tanzanian institution with emphasis on the social form of the extended family does borrow much from the experience of China's communes.
6. Bruce D. Larkin, *China and Africa, 1949-1970: The Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1971), p. 165.
7. George T. Yu, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 432, "China's Role in Africa" (July 1977), p. 100.
8. The Department is presently undergoing additional personnel change as the rehabilitated Teng Hsiao-ping appoints members of his personal clique.
9. Many of China's foremost African history professors were purged during these years.
10. David Kan, *The Impact of the Cultural Revolution on Chinese Higher Education* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1971), p. 138.



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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This study presents a clearly different approach to bilateral relations with African countries than that which has been the conventional approach of the United States and the Soviet Union. The Chinese model's past and potential utility in both its military and developmental application is examined. The indigenous structural apparatus that services this model is outlined both in its governmental and semi-official profiles. The degree of adulteration of that model is measured in light of its interaction with Chinese internal		

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political convulsions. The overall effectiveness of the Chinese approach is scrutinized in brief discussions of various bilateral relationships. Chinese foreign policy in Africa is studied in its potential to affect the US posture in Africa.

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